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A SHORT VIEW OF THE

LIFE, SENTIMENTS, AND CHARACTER

OF

MR. JOHN MORT,

IN AN ADDRESS TO THE

DISSENTERS OF ATHERTON;

AND IN A

SERMON

PREACHED IN NEW BENT CHAPEL, JANUARY 20, 1783.

BY .H. TOULMIN.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

TWO FAMILY PRAYERS, BY MR. MORT.

WARRINGTON,

Printed by W. EYRES, and sold by J. JOHNSON, N°. 72, St. Paul's Church-Yard, LONDON, and JANE TOULMIN, TAUNTON.

MDCCLXXXIX.

Price *One Shilling.*

TO THE SOCIETY OF

PROTESTANT DISSENTERS

IN ATHERTON.

MY CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,

SUCH is your regard for the memory of our late worthy patriarch, that I am perſuaded it will be doing you a kindneſs, if I attempt to improve and perpetuate your acquaintance with his character. This, I flatter myſelf, I ſhall be able to do in ſome degree, as I have been obligingly favoured by his much eſteemed executor with a peruſal of ſome of his letters and other private papers. It will ſcarcely be in my power to add any thing to your knowledge of his family, or of the incidents of his life, on which account I ſhould decline ſaying any thing relative to either, were it not probable that the following diſcourſe will fall into the hands of a few friends, to whom ſome little intelligence upon theſe particulars might be agreeable.

Mr. John Mort was the laſt male repreſentative of an ancient and reſpectable family, of Warton Hall

Hall in this county. During the civil wars in the Reign of Charles I. his family ſignalized themſelves by their ſteady attachment to the royal cauſe.* But upon the ſeverities which, in the reign of Charles II. were exerciſed towards the Diſſenters, the conduct of Mr. Mort's grandfather afforded an example among many others, of the tendency which perſecution has to increaſe the ſtrength of the religious party againſt which it is employed. Filled with indignation at the conduct of the court,—touched with pity towards the unfortunate non-conformiſts, who were not permit-

* An old writer, of the oppoſite party, in his account of the taking of Preſton, ſays, "There were divers ſlain "on their ſide in the aſſault, and as if men muſt have needs "ſingled out ſome, of ſet purpoſe, for the ſlaughter, yea "the Manchesterians themſelves could ſcarcely have picked "out fitter Men, (if they would any) for the ſword, than "thoſe that were ſlain in the fight; namely, the Major "of Preſton, by name Mr. Adam Mort (a man reſolute "even to deſperateneſſe, in the cauſe he ſtood for, who had "oftentimes been heard to ſay, and ſwear too *'He would "fire the towne ere he would give it up, and begin with his own "houſe'*) who fighting moſt deſperately, and having killed "one of the colonel's men in the fight, with puſh of pike, "inſtantly after loſt his own life for it, together with his "own ſon alſo, a bold and deſperate young malignant. "Sir Gilbert Houghton's brother, a captain of their "Horſe and a deſperate papiſt was alſo ſlain." Vicars' Jehovah-Jireh, God in the Mount, or England's Parliamentarie-Chronicle, 4to. 1644, p. 269.

About two years after the above event (viz. Aug. 25, 1650) a great uncle of Mr. Mort's, who fought by Sir Thomas Tyldeſley, very narrowly eſcaped with his life near Wigan.

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ted to ſeparate in peace from the church by law eſtabliſhed; the grandfather of our late friend, joined himſelf to the diſſenters, and encouraged them to meet in his own houſe for the purpoſe of divine worſhip. The perſon who generally officiated as miniſter of the congregation aſſembled in Warton Hall, was Mr. James Woods* one of thoſe two thouſand noble, conſcientious clergymen, who, when the *Act of Uniformity* was paſſed, diſdained to continue in a poſt, which they could hold no longer but by a proſtitution of religious principle. This conduct of Mr. Mort's ſubjected him to ſome of thoſe hardſhips which had excited his compaſſion towards the non-conformiſts, and he was, more than once, under a neceſſity of paying the fine, required by law for ſuffering a conventicle in his houſe. Finding no reaſon to expect more juſt and humane treatment upon the acceſſion of James II. the family began to direct their attention towards New England, the aſylum of many of their brethren who, in their native country, had been robbed of the privilege of worſhipping God according to the dictates of their conſciences.

A perſon was, therefore, ſent to America to procure a ſettlement for them, and they were actually preparing to leave a country to which

* The father of Mr. (commonly called General) Woods. He was the ſtated miniſter at the old chapel, upon Chowbent. He was ſon of Mr. Woods of Aſhton in Macclesfield, who alſo was one of the ejected Miniſters, and died in 1688.

they were united by the moſt endearing ties,—when the glorious Revolution, diſcloſed a bright and animating proſpect to the friends of civil and religious liberty. Upon this the thoughts of removing to New England were diſmiſſed: and, the *Act of Toleration* being paſſed, public religious ſervice was regularly performed by Mr. Cheney in one of the apartments at Warton Hall. I find an honourable mention made of theſe hearty friends of liberty and religion in the life of Mr. Matthew Henry. Mr. Henry (ſays the writer of his life) contracted a very intimate acquaintance with Mr. James Woods of Atherton, and with Mr. Mort's family,—a family well known in that country for their conſtant regard to religion and great reſpect to the faithful Miniſters of Chriſt, both in the preſent and laſt generation. Mr. Robert Mort,* father to him who is at preſent, head of the family, was a gentleman, that feared God above many: he was one of the greateſt examples of humility, charity, and primitive chriſtianity, that our age has known: he was loved and honoured by all of what perſuaſion ſoever:—the moſt profane and looſe of all his neighbours, were hardly ever known to ſpeak evil of him:—he greatly honoured God and religion, and his poſterity are bleſſed. (Henry's Life, p. 196.)

The removal of the Mort family into Atherton was of ſignal benefit to the ſociety of diſſenters

* Grandfather of the late Mr. John Mort.

belonging

belonging to this place, who in thoſe days aſſembled for the purpoſes of religious worſhip at the old chapel upon Chowbent.

Mr. Nathan Mort (the father of our late friend) was induced to make peculiar exertions in behalf of our diſſenting ſociety, by a ſtrong perſonal attachment to the miniſter Mr. Woods, junior, a man who will be long remembered in this neighbourhood, as a facetious companion,—as a faithful ſervant of the Lord Jeſus,—and as a firm friend to the religion and liberties of his country.

It will be an article of intelligence to none of you, my brethren, that in the year 1715, alarmed at the progreſs of the Pretender, he headed a body* compoſed of all the hail and courageous men in his congregation, armed with the implements of huſbandry, and marched them to Preſton, where General Wills commiſſioned him to

* The following is an exact copy of the letter which occaſioned Mr. Woods' expedition. A ſlip of it being torn off; I have been forced to ſupply the words incloſed between the ( ).

"*To the Rev. Mr.* Woods, *in* Chowbent, *for his Majeſty's Service*

CHARLES WILLS

The officers here deſign to march at break of day for Preſton, they have deſi(red me) to raiſe what men I can to meet us att Pr(eſton to-)morrow, ſo deſire you to raiſe all the force you (can) I mean luſty young fellows to draw upon C(uerden) Green, to be there by 10 o'clock to bring w(ith

to ſecure the poſſeſſion of Walton bridge, which brave and loyal conduct King George I. was pleaſed to acknowledge by an honourable memorial of his favour. Nor will you ſoon forget his active zeal in procuring aſſiſtance to erect a large commodious chapel, when, in conſequence of your ſteadineſs to the cauſe of liberty, at the general election in the year 1722, the lord of the manor, warmed with that party-ſpirit, which then burned in almoſt every boſom, deprived you of the place of worſhip in which you had been uſed to aſſemble: a meaſure, which in many reſpects proved highly advantageous, to the intereſts of your ſociety, but a meaſure, which, we perſuade ourſelves, his deſcendants of the preſent day, were it in their power, would have too much greatneſs of mind to imitate.

Among the late Mr. Mort's papers, I find an epitaph, which (as he was accuſtomed to do for moſt of thoſe whom he peculiarly eſteemed) he drew up ſoon after the death of Mr. Woods, and which, I doubt not, it will give you pleaſure to peruſe.

w(ith them) what arms they have fitt for ſervice, and (ſcythes) put in ſtreight polls, and ſuch as have not, to bring ſpades and bill hooks for Pionee(ring) with; pray go immediately all amongſt y(our) neighbours and give this notice

I am

youſ very f(aithful)

WIGAN 11th Nov. 1715 Servant

H. HOG(HTON)

Cuerden Green is about two miles from Preſton in Wigan Road."

THIS

inſcribed,

as a teſtimony of reſpect and gratitude,

to perpetuate the memory

OF

The Rev. JAMES WROOD,

Animated with an ardent zeal for the

happy conſtitution of his country,

by a brave and generous conduct in the year MDCCXV

HE *acquired an honourable name among the friends of*

PUBLIC LIBERTY.

By an open, cheerful, and upright converſation

proceeding from the goodneſs of his heart

HE *attracted the eſteem of all who knew him.*

After ſerving this ſociety as a CHRISTIAN MINISTER

with affection and fidelity

in the ſpirit of meekneſs and piety, above ſixty years,

HE *fell aſleep, February* MDCCLIX.

The reſpect you entertain for the memory of this worthy perſon, will plead an apology for my having as yet made ſo little mention of Mr. Mort.

Mr. John Mort, the younger ſon of Mr. Nathan Mort, was born at Warton Hall, in the pariſh of Dean, on March 30, 1702, new ſtile. When he was about ten years of age, his father removed into Atherton, and placed him under the care of Mr. Barrow the ſchool-maſter of this place, deſigning him to appear, in future life, in the character of a Chriſtian Miniſter. The earneſt wiſhes of his father, in this reſpect, were painfully diſappointed; for the young man felt himſelf

himſelf utterly averſe from the idea of engaging in the profeſſion for which he was intended,—partly becauſe he had not taſte for ſome of the ſtudies preparatory to it, and partly becauſe his natural powers of ſpeech, were by no means ſuch as it is highly deſirable that a public ſpeaker ſhould poſſeſs. But the hearts of his friends were ſo tenaciouſly fixed upon his appearing in the office of a teacher of religion, that he thought it neceſſary, in order to ſecure his future comfort, to remove to ſome diſtant ſituation. Upon opening his mind to his elder brother, it was determined, that he ſhould retire to Nottingham. Thither he accordingly went in the nineteenth year of his age, and bound himſelf an apprentice to a ſtocking-weaver. At Nottingham Mr. Mort firſt imbibed a ſpirit of inquiry. Dr. Clarke's *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*, had excited the attention of many diſſenters in that town, and was beginning to produce a conſiderable revolution in their religious ſentiments. Though the doctrines which are termed orthodox, had been carefully inſtilled into the mind of Mr. Mort, he felt a diſpoſition freely to inveſtigate religious ſubjects. Fortunately a reading ſociety was eſtabliſhed at Nottingham, of which he gladly became a member:—and as thoſe books were wiſely admitted that canvaſſed religious queſtions (which are of all the moſt intereſting and important) he was enabled to purſue his inquiries, at a trifling expenſe, and with the advantage of the company of thoſe fellow-ſearchers after truth, who could either quicken his progreſs,

progreſs, by removing thoſe obſtacles which, when alone, he would have been unable to ſurmount, — or check that ardour for puſhing forward, which ſometimes carries a man into the mazes of error and ſcepticiſm.

Thoſe who have a due ſenſe of the moral dangers which beſet a young man, full of ſpirits, glowing with youthful ardour, diſtant from the controuling eye of a parent, — will acknowledge the hand of the kind providence of God, in the diſpoſition which, at the moſt critical period of life, Mr. Mort diſcovered for the improvement of his mind, and in his falling in, among ſtrangers, with a ſet of ſerious companions. So ſenſible was he of the advantages which he derived from being at Nottingham, that he retained an uncommon partiality for that place to the lateſt period of his life. He could ſcarcely give a plainer proof of the high opinion he had of ſuch aſſociations for reading as he was there a member of, than by being inſtrumental, as he was fifty years ago, in eſtabliſhing a Book Society in this village, and by viewing with the greateſt pleaſure the more recent exertions for extending chriſtian knowledge, which have been made by a perſon, who, in the humbler department, aſſiſts in conducting your public religious ſervices, — and to whom, you will permit me to ſay, I think, the cauſe of free inquiry, is under conſiderable obligations.

Mr. Mort continued at Nottingham about three years and a half. Upon his return to Atherton, he united with his brother, in carrying on

on the ſuſtian buſineſs, preſerving, in mercantile tranſactions, the ingenuous ſimplicity of the Chriſtian, and maintaining, to the laſt, amid all the allurements of intereſt, a character ſtrictly irreproachable. With reſpect to Mr. Mort's views of the doctrines of the goſpel, at this period; it does not appear to what extent he had proceeded in doubting of the truth of thoſe religious tenets, which he afterwards rejected as corruptions of chriſtianity. That the *Athanaſian* doctrine of the Trinity*, was no longer conſidered by him as a doctrine of the ſcriptures, is a point which, I conceive, will not admit of any doubt. He had probably made up his mind, as we term it, in favour of the opinion, that the Lord Jeſus, though a creature, was greatly ſuperior to men and angels, and exiſted before the creation of the world. Satisfied with this idea of our Lord's perſon; it is likely that he gave no attention to the queſtion concerning his pre-exiſtence,—and his mind was leſs at liberty to purſue inquiries of this nature, in conſequence of the regard which for many years he paid to the ſtudy of hiſtory, of

* To thoſe of you who are not acquainted with the Athanaſian creed, the following paſſages will be a curioſity. "There is one perſon of the Father, another of the Son, "and another of the Holy Ghoſt.——The Father is "Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghoſt "Almighty. And yet there are not three Almighties, but "one Almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, "and the Holy Ghoſt is God: and yet there are not three "Gods but one God.——This is the Catholic Faith, which "except a man believe faithfully, HE CANNOT BE SAVED." So ſays the ingenious author of *the Creed of Saint Athanaſius*.

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which, I am informed, he poſſeſſed a very extenſive knowledge. He was, however, led to reconſider his notion of our Lord's perſon, in a later period of his life, by the writings of Mr. Paul Cardale, and by ſome articles in the Theological Repoſitory, upon, what is called, the Socinian Doctrine. His notice was drawn to theſe publications, by ſome particular acquaintance whom he held in great eſteem, and whoſe friendly debates upon the ſubject diſcuſſed in them, he often heard with ſilent, but thoughtful attention. After maturely conſidering the arguments advanced both in converſation and in print, againſt the opinion that our great Maſter exiſted before he was born of Mary;—he embraced the doctrine which was held by the general body of believers in the age immediately ſucceeding that of the apoſtles,* viz. that the Lord Jeſus was properly a human being, "a man approved of God,"† but, like all other creatures, dependant upon God for every thing, ſo that "of himſelf he could do nothing."‡ The publications which he had ſeen upon the ſubject, afforded, he thought, a ſatisfactory explanation of thoſe few texts of ſcripture in which our Lord ſpeaks of himſelf as "coming down from heaven,"‖ or in which occur expreſſions ſeeming to imply his

* Of this ſee Prieſtley's Hiſtory of Early Opinions concerning Chriſt.

† Acts ii. 22. ‡ John v. 19 and 30.

‖ See the Sequel to an Apology on reſigning the Vicarage of Catterick, by T. Lindſey, A. M.

having

having had a being before he appeared in this World.

He took peculiar pleaſure in peruſing the productions of Dr. Prieſtley, a writer from whoſe various works (ſays a very capable judge) above thoſe of any other in our own country, the riſing generation might reap the greateſt advantage, both in reſpect of uſeful knowledge and virtuous improvement.* Four diſcourſes of Dr. Lardner's, publiſhed ſince his death, entitled "Two Schemes "of a Trinity conſidered, and the divine Unity "aſſerted," gave much ſatisfaction to Mr. Mort: but what eſpecially leads me to *mention* them, in this place, is that I have been informed, upon very good authority, that they eſtabliſhed your late excellent miniſter, Mr. Mercer, in the belief that our Lord was properly a man, and had no exiſtence, before he was born in the land of Judea, about eighteen hundred years ago. Theſe examples of a mind ingenuous, and free to embrace the truth, at a period of life when moſt men are becoming more and more confirmed in their old habits of thinking, are truly worthy of our admiration, though it is to be feared that they are too great for many of us to be expected to imitate.

The ſentiments which Mr. Mort entertained upon other religious queſtions, were widely different from thoſe, which, in the preſent age, are

* See a moſt valuable piece entitled *Vindiciæ Prieſtleinæ*. An addreſs to the ſtudents of Oxford and Cambridge, by T. Lindſey, A. M.

eſteemed

eſteemed orthodox. He was firmly perſuaded, that the ſcriptures no where repreſent the *death of Jeſus*, as deſigned to appeaſe the wrath or to ſatisfy the juſtice of that Being, whoſe nature is love and goodneſs itſelf, and who, ages before our Lord was born, was worſhipped by his ſervants, as "a God ready to pardon, gracious "and merciful, ſlow to anger, and of great "kindneſs."* That cloud which his education had drawn over thoſe views of the divine character which are preſented in the goſpel, was greatly diſperſed upon his peruſal of a ſmall but very valuable tract, entitled, "Second Thoughts on the Death and Sufferings of Chriſt." He alſo often ſpoke in terms of the higheſt approbation of Mr. Graham's Fourteen Letters on the atonement. "Mr. Graham has ſaid enough (ob-"ſerves Mr. Mort, in a letter to a friend) to-"tally to bury the orthodox notion of atonement, "which ſo much diſhonoured and abuſed the "Almighty, and diſgraced the goſpel."

Having had frequent converſations with the late Dr. Taylor of Warrington, upon the doctrine of the ſcriptures concerning the *ſtate of man between death and the reſurrection*; he was led to believe, that there is no juſt ground for the opinion, that the ſoul exiſts in happineſs or miſery whilſt the body is mouldering in the grave. The principal conſideration which convinced him that the whole man dies at once, was that Jeſus and his apoſtles always direct

* Nehem. ix. 17.

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our attention to the *reſurrection*, which, he thought they would never have done, had they believed that good men would be admitted into heaven, perhaps thouſands of years before that reſurrection which will take place.

It is known, I doubt not, to many of you, my friends, that reſpecting the *rite of baptiſm*, Mr. Mort had nearly the ſame ideas as thoſe, which were maintained two hundred years ago by that excellent perſon Fauſtus Socinus, and which have been more recently defended by Mr. Emlyn and Mr. Wakefield. He thought that the Lord Jeſus never intended that baptiſm ſhould be practiſed by his diſciples in future ages: though, I conceive, he ſaw a propriety and utility in parents' requeſting ſome chriſtian friend or miniſter to unite with them in prayer to almighty God, upon the birth of a child, as well as upon any other intereſting event.

His ideas of the nature and deſign of that particular method of preſerving a remembrance of Jeſus, which we call the *Lord's Supper*, are ſufficiently apparent in the following addreſs which you recollect he printed upon a ſheet of paper and diſperſed among you.

A free and affectionate Addreſs *to all thoſe* profeſſing Chriſtians, *particularly the* Proteſtant Diſſenters, *that do not communicate at the* Lord's Supper, *but run away, as if they thought it dangerous, or diſagreeable, to be good. By a Lover of pure Chriſtianity unadulterated with human Syſtems.*

I AM apt to think that this neglect proceeds from a falſe notion of the nature of this inſtitution: but

but a careful attention to the hiſtory of it, by the apoſtles and evangeliſts, would do more to give you a right underſtanding, and ſettle your minds about it, than reading whole volumes on the ſubject. There, you find our Saviour in the moſt affecting diſcourſes with his diſciples, when going to leave them for a while; cheering them with the promiſe that he would ſend them a Comforter, and that he would come again to receive them: that where he was, they might be. He deſired them in the moſt friendly manner to meet at certain times, to eat and drink together, in thankful remembrance of him, until he came again to receive them.

What can be more plain, natural, and rational, than this friendly deſire at parting? You profeſs yourſelves chriſtians, and would be diſpleaſed with thoſe that denied it: but can you eſteem yourſelves worthy and faithful diſciples of Chriſt, whilſt you deliberately refuſe to ſhew him this reſpect, ſo affectionately deſired? Your Saviour cannot be pleaſed with you: for when Mary, out of her great reſpect to him, had poured on his head that coſtly ointment, he ſhewed his diſpleaſure at thoſe that blamed her, and ſaid, that this inſtance of reſpect to him ſhould be known, wherever his goſpel ſhould be preached.

Allow me to expoſtulate with you further—Put yourſelves into a caſe ſomething analogous.—Had you by infinite toil and ſuffering ſaved a certain number from poverty, miſery, and death, you could not but expect their gratitude: and you certainly would reſent it, if, contrary to your

deſire, they had refuſed to meet at certain times, to teſtify their grateful remembrance of you their Saviour.—Shew, then, this reſpect to your Saviour: he will be pleaſed, and it will be your profit. Your ſocial diſpoſitions will be improved. At this meeting all the communicants will be united together in love as one ſoul,—for can it be poſſible they ſhould diſobey the parting command of their Saviour, ſo often repeated? You will at that time be employed, not only in contemplating the love of the Father, and the generous, unparalleled love and condeſcenſion of the Son; but you will naturally be refreſhing your memory with conſidering the character of your Saviour, his ſufferings, examples, teachings, and exhortations. You will learn what temper and diſpoſition pleaſes him moſt, by conſidering the humane, compaſſionate, benevolent temper of the apoſtle John, which raiſed him to the honour of being the favourite of our Lord. I ſhould think it almoſt impoſſible but theſe meditations muſt inſpire you with the firmeſt reſolution to attain this happy temper.—Can you think it a matter of indifference at the great day of retribution, to be owned by the impartial Judge, and rewarded as his favourites before angels and men?"

You will, probably, be glad to read Mr. Mort's own account of his ſentiments, upon other points, as well as upon the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. It gives me pleaſure, that it is in ſome meaſure, in my power to gratify you in this deſire.

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In a paper I have before me, this worthy perſon ſpeaks of himſelf in the following manner. "I was very carefully brought up in the religion "of the Weſtminſter Aſſembly of Divines. But "when I arrived at a mature age, and judged "for myſelf, (after a diligent endeavour to un-"derſtand the New Teſtament, making a proper "uſe of what helps I could meet with, for that "end) I found that chriſtianity was very differ-"ent from the human ſyſtem taught in the "Aſſembly's Catechiſm. I therefore renounced "the latter and embraced the former. After liv-"ing above fifty years (for I am now only a few "weeks ſhort of eighty-three) I am perfectly ſatiſ-"fied with my choice, and for ſome years have "thought that the fidelity I owe to my Saviour, "obliges me to uſe my beſt abilities to pro-"mote pure chriſtianity, unadulterated with hu-"man ſyſtems."

What Mr. Mort meant by pure chriſtianity, you will learn from the following contraſt, which many of you, probably, have already ſeen. It is inſerted here, merely becauſe it gives one view of Mr. Mort's religious ſentiments. The references which are added under each article, will aſſiſt you in forming ſome judgment how far it contains a juſt repreſentation of the doctrine of the Aſſembly's Catechiſm, and of the chriſtian ſcriptures—though, you will permit me to obſerve, that the doctrine of the New Teſtament is, in my opinion, to be ſought rather in the general ſtrain and ſpirit of it, than in a few detached paſſages.

"The difference of the religion of the aſſembly of divines at Weſtminſter, from that of Jeſus Chriſt, ſeems to be great; as *contraſted* in the *columns* underneath. That of the aſſembly of divines on the left; and that of Jeſus Chriſt on the right column; with reſpect to *authority*, *doctrine*, and *character*.

AUTHORITY.	AUTHORITY.
Derived from fallible and prejudiced men.	Commiſſioned by the Almighty, to be the light of the world, to ſhew the true way to eternal life and happineſs. Approved of God by a voice from heaven, by miracles, by wonders, and ſigns.
DOCTRINES.	DOCTRINES.
The Deity ſplit into three—Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt: all equal in power and glory. (Aſſemb. ſhorter Catechiſm: An. 6.)	One God the Father, and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt. The Father greater than the Son. The Son obedient to the Father in all things, even to death. 1 Cor. viii. 6. xi. 3. John xiv. 28. John v. 30. John x. 17.
Children guilty of Adam's ſin, and liable to eternal puniſhment. (An. 16—19.)	Children bleſſed by Jeſus Chriſt; and his followers warmly exhorted to be like them in innocence, who are the peculiar care of angels. Of ſuch is the kingdom of heaven. Mark x. 13—6. Luke xviii. 16, 17. Matt. xviii. 3.
The innocent puniſhed for the guilty. Chriſt ſuffering the wrath of God for a time. (An. 25 and 27.)	God the Father, well pleaſed with his Son, loved him becauſe he laid down his life. John x. 17. John xvii. 24, 5. Phil. ii.* 8—11. Heb. xii. 2.

* The words (ver. 6.) rendered "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," are tranſlated more agreeably to the general tenor of ſcripture, by many learned men: "thought not the being like to God a thing to be greedily ſeized by him."

A certain

A certain number predeſtinated to ſalvation. All the reſt left to periſh. (An. 20.)	All, without exception, that repent and believe, fear God, and work righteouſneſs, are accepted and ſaved. Thoſe that do good, are merciful and compaſſionate, will moſt certainly enter the joy of their Lord. Acts x. 35. Matt. xxvi. 31, to the end.
Perſonal righteouſneſs availeth nothing for a man's juſtification, unleſs he believe that another perſon's righteouſneſs ſhall be imputed to him. Thus depreciating the moral character. (An. 33.)	He that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous. They that turn many to righteouſneſs, ſhall ſhine as the ſtars in the firmament. Our Saviour himſelf doing the greateſt honour to moral excellence, by admitting into his moſt intimate favour and friendſhip, the apoſtle who excelled the others in the moral virtues. Poſſibly on this account exempting him from the moſt ſevere trials, and revealing to him the knowledge of the moſt important future events. 1 John iii. 7. Dan. xii. 3. John xix. 26.
CHARACTER.	CHARACTER
Of the followers of the aſſembly of divines.	Of the followers of Jeſus Chriſt.
Perſecutors.*	Perſecuted——As, Mr. Biddle, Mr. Emlyn, Mr. Pierce, Profeſſor Simpſon, &c. &c. for their faithful adherence to the important truths of chriſtianity."

Among other friends to whom Mr. Mort ſent the above contraſt of the Calviniſtical doctrines, with thoſe which he eſteemed to be the doctrines of the chriſtian ſcriptures, was a worthy perſon whoſe character and mental attainments are an honour to his lowly ſtation. I need not apologize

* Yet there are many of them who have ſuffered for righteouſneſs ſake.

to you for introducing a letter from him to Mr. Mort, upon the occaſion.

"SIR, *Heaton*, Dec. 21, 1782.

I RECEIVED yours with a paper you ſent me. I eſteem it a very particular favor. It is an honor I could not have expected. I am alſo much obliged to ſome friend or friends for giving you ſo favourable an idea of my character.

I peruſed your paper with a great deal of pleaſure. The point of view, in which you have placed the difference between the religion of the divines at Weſtminſter and that of Jeſus Chriſt is very ſtriking. Though I have long been convinced that thoſe doctrines held by the Weſtminſter divines are not only inconſiſtent with reaſon and our beſt notions of the perfections and character of the Divine Being, but are alſo contrary to what our Saviour and his apoſtles taught in the New Teſtament;—yet I cannot ſay, that I had ever contraſted them in my own mind in ſo plain and obvious a manner."——"The difference of character ſeems to be the natural reſult of the difference of doctrines. For as the religion of Jeſus leads men to be meek and humble, candid and charitable, merciful, compaſſionate and forgiving, and to do good to all;—the doctrines of the Weſtminſter divines (by repreſenting God as partial, arbitrary, cruel, unjuſt, puniſhing the innocent for the guilty, electing ſome to everlaſting life, without any regard to moral character, and dooming the reſt to everlaſting puniſhment; theſe doctrines) lead many

many who entertain them to a kind of preſumption and ſpiritual pride, eſteeming themſelves the elect of God, and the favourites of heaven, cenſuring and condemning all who differ from them as reprobates and the enemies of God, ſhutting up their bowels of compaſſion from them, and even ſometimes thinking that they render God ſervice by perſecuting and afflicting them.

Theſe being ſome, among many, of the unhappy effects of embracing the doctrines of the aſſembly of divines or Calviniſm; it will be the wiſh of every liberal-minded, benevolent man, who is a ſincere friend to the beſt intereſts of mankind, that it were in his power to do ſomething towards opening the eyes of ſuch deluded, but yet well meaning perſons. But the proſpect of ſucceſs, I fear, ſeems not very promiſing. For whilſt ſuch perſons are generally ſo full of themſelves, as to look on all, who differ from them, as being in the wrong, and they themſelves only in the right,—whilſt they declare, that common ſenſe is a fool, and natural reaſon blind and erroneous,—whilſt they conſider the workings of their own imaginations and fancies, as divine inſpirations,—whilſt they entertain ſuch unworthy notions of the Divine Being, and eſteem moral excellence as of no value; what can be expected from them,—what arguments can be made uſe of to convince them? Indeed the method, which you have pointed out, appears to be a likely means of convincing every one, who is inclined to conſider ſuch ſubjects with any degree of coolneſs and moderation. More eſpe-

cially is it adapted to have the happieſt effects upon the minds of ſuch as are in the earlier part of life, who are not yet wedded to any particular ſyſtem, but have their minds open to receive the truth."——"Something of the like kind with yours, but on a different ſubject, has been done ſome time ſince in the introduction to a pamphlet entitled, 'A Free and Serious Addreſs to the Chriſtian Laity,' &c.* wherein the object of worſhip of the holy ſcriptures, is contraſted with the object of worſhip of the Church of England and of ſome diſſenters. The author of the Addreſs, thinks it the duty of thoſe who embrace unitarian ſentiments, to ſeparate themſelves from the trinitarian worſhip, and form diſtinct ſocieties.

In the London Evening Poſt, of the 26th—28th of November laſt, we have an account, that the week before 'the Rev. Dr. Diſney of Swinderley in Lincolnſhire, and formerly of Peter Houſe, Cambridge, reſigned all his eccleſiaſtical preferments, on account of his objections to the trinitarian forms of worſhip in the eſtabliſhed church.' Another noble inſtance of integrity, firmneſs, and reſolution in the cauſe of truth and conſcience, to be added to the venerable liſt of a Lindſey, a Jebb, an Evanſon, a Robertſon, &c. &c.

I am afraid I have treſpaſſed much on your patience by the length of this. I have no apology to make but the reliance I have on your

* By Joſhua Toulmin, A. M.

generous

generous indulgence and candour. I know of nothing that ſhould have hindered me from doing myſelf the honour and pleaſure of ſeeing you, but a ſtrong ſenſe of the obligations I am under of attention to one of the beſt of mothers now grown almoſt helpleſs, through the infirmities of old age and ſickneſs. If I can poſſibly make it convenient, I intend to come to ſee you, ſome time ere it be very long. In the mean time I I remain

Your much obliged friend and

humble ſervant,

JAMES KAY."

Though our late friend, and the worthy perſon whoſe valuable letter I have in part tranſcribed, entertained ſuch ſerious and alarming apprehenſions of the pernicious tendency of the orthodox or Calviniſtical doctrines; yet you will not imagine, that they concluded, that every perſon who held thoſe doctrines muſt have been deſtitute of moral worth and excellence. Thoſe leading principles of chriſtianity, which are embraced by every ſerious believer in Jeſus, are frequently, one would hope generally, powerful enough to counteract the miſchievous influence of any ſet of ſpeculative opinions. Beſides, truly good perſons, ſhutting their eyes to the dark ſide of their religious ſyſtem, will naturally endeavour to find out ſome practical uſe in every ſuppoſed truth: they will impreſs it upon the minds of their children, and thus, thoſe very doctrines, which

one

one ſhould think would poiſon a man's diſpoſition, have really a conſiderable ſhare in forming and perfecting his religious character. Genuine charity ſhould alſo teach us to believe, that almighty God will never condemn men for their errors in religious *worſhip*, when they are accompanied with a good heart, and ſpring from a pure deſire of ſerving him according to the beſt of their abilities.

" It is my opinion," ſays Mr. Mort, " that the " Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the one " ſupreme God, that he only is to be worſhipped, " and that (as a great writer expreſſes himſelf) " to aſſert, that the ſupreme Creator of all things, " hath in theſe laſt ages of our world been made " one of his own creatures is blaſpheming the " eternal Deity. It is alſo my opinion that wor- " ſhipping a plurality of Gods is idolatry. But " notwithſtanding this, I have ſo much charity for " thoſe miſtaken worſhippers, as to believe that " their good intention will be accepted."

But though Mr. Mort entertained ſuch juſt and liberal ſentiments concerning thoſe who, believing it to be their duty, worſhip Jeſus the highly favoured of God; yet you know, my friends, that he himſelf never paid religious adoration to any but the one only living Jehovah, nor, by his preſence, countenanced the devotions of a church which beſides the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, prays to a God the Son, and a God the Holy Ghoſt. To worſhip the " man Chriſt Jeſus,"* he thought

* 1 Tim. ii. 5.

would

would be for him to be guilty of idolatry. He rejoiced therefore in ſeeing unitarians act conſiſtently with their principles, and often ſpoke with rapture of thoſe worthy perſons, who voluntarily reſigned their poſts of honour and profit in the eſtabliſhed church, that they might be no longer compelled to worſhip any other than the only true God. I alſo find him mentioning with much pleaſure, Mr. Chriſtie, a merchant of Montroſe in Scotland, who, in the year 1781, with a ſociety of profeſſed unitarians, withdrew from the trinitarian worſhip of the Church of Scotland, and has ſince that time regularly conducted the public ſervices of religion, agreeably, as he conceives, to the precepts and examples of Jeſus and his apoſtles. "This moſt learned and moſt excellent chriſtian "(ſays Mr. M.) has publiſhed his caſe, and "ſeveral of his own ſermons, proving that the "Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the one "ſupreme God, and that he only is to be wor-"ſhipped, which carries irreſiſtible conviction "to every unprejudiced reader."*

In the copy of a letter to a friend, dated May 22, 1786, which accompanied a little piece reſpecting Mr. Elwal, who was tried at the Stafford aſſize in the year 1726, for maintaining the doctrine of the divine unity, Mr. Mort remarks, "that a plain, honeſt, illiterate man, about fifty

† See a farther account of the Scotch Unitarian Chriſtians in North Britain, in a moſt entertaining and improving work, entitled, An Hiſtorical View of the State of the Unitarian Doctrine and Worſhip, from the Reformation to our own Times. By Theophilus Lindſey, A. M.

"or

" or ſixty years ago ſhould, by ſtudying the mean-
" ing of the New Teſtament, have a truer know-
" ledge of religion and chriſtianity, than, almoſt
" any one, at that time, of the learned biſhops and
" clergy of the Church of England, or of the
" learned diſſenters, how aſtoniſhing! That this
" honeſt cutler, ſhould, at the Stafford aſſizes,
" vindicate his cauſe without the help of counſel,
" and prove ſo clearly that important truth, of
" the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt being the
" one, only ſupreme God, ſo as to baffle and
" confound the learned clergy his proſecutors,—
" how aſtoniſhing! how pleaſing!"

You may perceive how much the heart of our venerable friend was ſet upon doing all he could to overturn the Calviniſtical ſyſtem, from a letter which, juſt before his death, he ſent to our brethren, at Warton, with the view of leading them to inquire into the truth of thoſe doctrines which he looked upon as corruptions of chriſtianity.

" *To the* MEMBERS *of the* WARTON *Religious Society.*

MY CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,

I doubt not but you will receive this addreſs with candour, which is dictated with a ſincere wiſh for your welfare. You have been brought up in that ſyſtem of religion called orthodox, in which there now appear to be, as is made evident to imparital unprejudiced inquirers, ſome dangerous errors, that have a bad tendency. One is making the Son equal to the Father; which is a direct breach

breach of the firſt commandment, and is contrary to what our Saviour always ſaid of himſelf. Another very dangerous error, is, that God will not pardon the ſinner, upon his repentance and amendment, without a ſubſtitute, ſuffering in his ſtead; which is expreſsly contrary to what is aſſerted both in the Old and New Teſtament. Another error, is, that ſome are predeſtinated to be ſaved, the reſt left to periſh. Another error is, that *our* obedience and goodneſs, is of no avail, but another's muſt be accepted inſtead.

Theſe errors originated at Rome,* and have been forced on men's conſciences by perſecution, which character is the antichriſt propheſied by the apoſtles Paul and John, and not the *Pope* of Rome, but a *Character*.

Never forget what is moſt pleaſing to God, and our Saviour, which is an humble, humane, compaſſionate, benevolent temper. This temper made the apoſtle John our Saviour's favourite.

I think the above truths are ſelf-evident, and need no elaborate reaſoning to prove them. The contrary do much harm, as they give a falſe notion of the moral attributes of the Deity."

Mr. Mort's zeal againſt the diſtinguiſhing tenets of orthodox chriſtians, was more warm and determined, than, probably it would otherwiſe have been, in conſequence of a perſuaſion, that they are an inſurmountable obſtacle to the

* See an Hiſtory of the Corruptions of Chriſtianity, by J. Prieſtley, L L. D.

converſion

converſion of ſerious unbelievers of every denomination. "Whilſt the Jews and Deiſts (ſays he) take the ſyſtem of religion taught in the Aſſembly's Catechiſm, for chriſtianity, it is almoſt impoſſible they ſhould be chriſtians. It is ſaid, that Mr. Matthew Henry's learned ſon Warburton, choſe the religion of nature, rather than that of his father's." He, therefore, thought that it clearly appeared to be the duty of rational chriſtians, "to uſe their utmoſt endeavours to advance the intereſts of pure, uncorrupted chriſtianity. They muſt ſee their obligation to do this, as they profeſs to ſeek the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, and are daily praying, that his kingdom may come and his will be done. They muſt, alſo, neceſſarily rejoice in beholding the pillars of antichriſtian eſtabliſhments already ſhaking, and the ſupporters of them trembling, and muſt indulge pleaſing hopes, that the time is not very far diſtant, when they ſhall fall, and agreeably to prophecy, an univerſal reformation in the minds and manners of men take place."

There is a ſmall ſlip of paper, upon which Mr. Mort has written, "Underneath this ſtone lies John Mort——who learned his religion from the New Teſtament, and not from corrupt human ſyſtems. He thought it his duty to do his utmoſt, to root out or leſſen the miſchievous effects of that antichriſtian religion called Calviniſm."

You have ſeen in what light our late friend viewed the doctrines of the Church of England. But whilſt he rejected her creed, and thought her chargeable

chargeable with idolatry in her devotions; he approved of her *mode* of worſhip in preference to that of the diſſenters. In a letter to a very worthy and reſpectable perſon, with whoſe activity in introducing a printed form of prayer into the religious ſervices of the ſociety with which he was connected, Mr. Mort was well acquainted, he thus ſpeaks of himſelf. "I am one of thoſe very few diſſenters, who for many years have been diſpleaſed, with the almoſt univerſal prejudice of even thoſe called rational diſſenters, againſt the uſe of liturgies in public worſhip. No one more rejoiced when I firſt heard, ſome years ago, of your generous deſign to introduce that mode of worſhip."

As many of you, my friends, are probably but little acquainted with the queſtion concerning the propriety of printed forms of prayer, and may wonder upon what principles Mr. M. could approve of a mode of worſhip ſo little adopted by diſſenters;—you will be pleaſed with an extract or two from a letter upon the ſubject, in anſwer to that juſt mentioned.

"Did not obſervation and experience evince, how much the generality of mankind are led by cuſtom and habit, more than by reaſon and reflection; one would wonder at the averſion which many amongſt the rational diſſenters have entertained to the uſe of a liturgy in public worſhip, more eſpecially as with the uſe of it, an opportunity of extempore or free prayer being admitted, the peculiar advantages of both might be united. In this view, I cannot but wiſh the practiſe more

more general; I mean only amongſt thoſe whoſe minds are ſufficiently enlarged to concur in declining the introduction of any diſputable opinion, deſiring to retain nothing, but what any candid and ſincere chriſtian may join in the uſe of.

Though I think the uſe of a liturgy preferable to the preſent mode of worſhip among diſſenters; yet I eſteem it a happy circumſtance that it has not in times paſt obtained amongſt them, as it might have been the means of preſerving many erroneous notions and abſurd phraſes, which are now gradually ſinking into oblivion: but wherever chriſtianity is underſtood and profeſſed in its genuine ſimplicity;* there one cannot but wiſh, that the public offices of devotion, might be rendered ſtable and permanent, as a laſting barrier againſt the encroachments of ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm.

The uſe of reſponſes in public worſhip, is, I think, a delightful and animating part, tending to engage the attention of the people, and rendering the ſervice more ſocial, than where one perſon acts a ſolitary part.

It is not my intention to enlarge on the comparative merit of the two different modes, as I recollect I am writing to one, who has ſufficiently conſidered the ſubject. But I would beg leave to

* But ſince it is impoſſible to know with certainty when chriſtianity is profeſſed in its genuine ſimplicity; would it not be wiſe in every ſociety when adopting a liturgy, to inveſt a number of perſons with the power of reviſing and correcting it whenever they ſhould think it expedient?

mention

mention another circumſtance, wherein the peculiar advantage and expediency, of a Liturgy or pre-compoſed Form, muſt, I think, be generally acknowledged. In ſome places, the number of diſſenters is too ſmall to ſupport a conſtant miniſter: they have only ſervice amongſt them occaſionally, or, perhaps, once a month: at other times they do not meet for want of a ſuitable perſon to lead their devotions in the preſent mode: ſome therefore ſtay at home: others go to the eſtabliſhed church, which occaſional conformity tends, by degrees to render them indifferent to the principles of their diſſent, and thus has led many families to conform entirely: this might probably be prevented, and their meetings conſtantly kept up by the uſe of a Form, which any perſons of moral conduct, and moderate abilities might read in a manner, at leaſt edifying, though not with the propriety of ſuperior talents."*

So averſe was Mr. Mort from extempore prayer, that, as I am informed, he always made uſe of a Form in conducting family worſhip. You will be pleaſed with thoſe ſpecimens of his devotional ſpirit, which I ſhall tranſcribe for the uſe of thoſe of you who may think proper to adopt them, in performing the daily religious ſervices of their families. How nearly he agreed in ſentiment

* Some valuable obſervations on Liturgies may be ſeen, in an excellent work entitled, "The Principles of Moral and Political Philoſophy, by W. Paley, M. A. Archdeacon of Carliſle."

with the writer of the letter juſt quoted, reſpecting the peculiar propriety of forms of prayer being adopted by ſocieties, which have no ſtated miniſter, you will ſee from the following addreſs. It was written about the year 1774.

" It is humbly propoſed to the conſideration " of all rational diſſenters, whether if the follow- " ing plan of rules and orders, or others of the " like nature, were adopted and obſerved by " their religious ſocieties; it would not tend " greatly to improve the particular members of " them, in uſeful knowledge, in amiable diſpo- " ſitions, and in the practice of the chriſtian " virtues.

" If they have no ſtated miniſter;* let thoſe " members, who are of the beſt character and

* " For the apprehenſion of the neceſſity of a ſtanding " miniſtry, for the purpoſe of conducting public worſhip in " chriſtian aſſemblies, ſeems to be a miſtake, and may have " been one reaſon of the diſſolution of ſome diſſenting ſo- " cieties, when not able to maintain a miniſter."

" It is written (ſays Tertullian, who lived ſixteen " hundred years ago) *He hath made us kings and prieſts to* " *God and his Father.* The diſtinction between clergy and " laity was made by the church, and approved by the " bench of elders. So that where there is none of that " bench, you yourſelf both offer and baptize, and are your " own prieſt; nay where there are three they make a " church though they are lay-men. For every man lives " by his own faith; nor is there any acceptance of perſons " with God. —— Therefore if you have the right of prieſt- " hood in yourſelf, you muſt have a right to exerciſe your " prieſthood when 'tis neceſſary." Quoted by Grotius in a Tract, printed in 'A Defence of the Rights of the Chriſtian church 1709,' p. 180.

" abilities,

" abilities, undertake the ſervices, uſually allotted
" to miniſters, of leading the devotions of the
" aſſembly in prayer, and of reading the ſcrip-
" tures, together with ſuch lectures, as are beſt
" calculated to give them a right underſtand-
" ing of natural and revealed religion, and which
" beſt tend to enforce the practice of every
" chriſtian duty. It is preſumed that there might
" be found ſome in every, or at leaſt moſt
" chriſtian ſocieties, willing to undertake this
" ſervice; as with the help of written forms of
" prayer, and the many uſeful diſcourſes now in
" print, no uncommon abilities are neceſſary for
" the undertaking. All of them would cheerfully
" concur in their endeavours to improve, as much
" as poſſible, that important and delightful part
" of religious worſhip, the ſinging of God's
" praiſe.

" In general: let there be a warm and ſincere
" zeal in all the members, to promote, as far as
" in their power, the happineſs of every parti-
" cular member of the ſociety, more eſpecially
" his ſpiritual welfare. Thoſe who are in po-
" verty and diſtreſs ſhould be relieved by thoſe
" in more affluent circumſtances, as near as can
" be, proportionably to the ſeveral abilities of
" the latter.

" Harmony of affections, and the ſincereſt
" friendſhip, ſhould be carefully cultivated and
" maintained among all the members, though
" differing in their opinions, about controverted
" points of divinity.

" Let the members of the ſociety take every
" proper opportunity to be well acquainted with
" one another. Let the more knowing take
" pleaſure in communicating knowledge, in the
" moſt condeſcending, acceptable way, to the
" more ignorant. Let the rich be far from
" aſſuming a haughty air, and learn that meek,
" that humble ſpirit, which will endear them to
" all their fellow members of inferior rank. It
" would not be amiſs, if theſe were at certain
" times admitted to their tables. 'Tis very prac-
" ticable to render table converſations very im-
" proving as well as pleaſant. By ſuch behaviour,
" their warmeſt affections and beſt wiſhes will be
" gained. A grateful, teachable diſpoſition, a
" ſober and diligent conduct will be the conſe-
" quence.

" With regard to all other denominations of
" chriſtians; let every member be poſſeſſed of
" the moſt catholic principles, and behave to-
" wards them in the moſt charitable and generous
" manner.

" Let all the members ſhow their affection
" to Chriſt, their love to one another, their gra-
" titude to God for the goſpel, by cheerfully
" embracing the ſtated opportunities, weekly or
" monthly, of joining with their fellow chriſtians
" in celebrating the Lord's Supper:—at that
" time, more eſpecially contemplating the cha-
" racter, teachings, ſufferings, condeſcenſion and
" love of their great Maſter.

" Let all the members, approving theſe rules
" and heartily conſenting to the practice, give in

" their

" their names; by which means they would all be
" known to one another.

" Vicious and refractory members, after all
" prudent methods have been taken to reclaim
" them, ſhould have their names eraſed.

" Every well-diſpoſed perſon, after duly con-
" ſidering theſe rules and orders, deſiring to
" become a member, ſhould be admitted, and
" ſubſcribe his name accordingly.

" A church, though ſmall, thus conſtituted
" and moulded, as it were, into one ſoul, bearing
" one another's burdens, conſidering one another
" to provoke unto love and to good works,—how
" lovely, how beautiful the idea!——"

You, my friends, can all bear teſtimony that Mr. Mort himſelf uniformly paid the ſtricteſt attention to the rules which you find he had laid down. You know, for you have often told me, how kind he was to all, how attentive to the wants of the poor, how mindful of your ſpiritual welfare. Having a perfect acquaintance with the congregation, he frequently, you recollect, expreſſed his concern to you when he had obſerved that your ſeats in the chapel were empty on that day in the week, which all confeſs is beſt ſpent in gaining religious knowledge and in cultivating a chriſtian temper. His anxiety for your continuing to improve in an amiable and heavenly frame of mind, would not permit him to quit the world, without leaving behind him that token of his affection, which you will meet with in the following diſcourſe. In that, as well as in ſome obſervations which have already occurred, you will perceive

what an impreſſion was made upon his mind by a conſideration of the character of the apoſtle John. But the following anecdote ſhows it more ſtrikingly. A few days after he was firſt impreſſed by meditating upon the humane temper of the boſom friend of Chriſt, as he was riding briſkly from Mancheſter, intent upon being home by tea time, he was ſuddenly ſtopt by a poor woman, who begged him to give her ſomething. He was vexed, and would not hear her. But as he lay on his bed in the night, and reflected upon what had paſſed in the day; his heart ſmote him for this conduct, and he could not be eaſy, till he had, in the morning, walked upwards of two miles to ſee her and give her ſome little relief. He himſelf thought that he ſhould not have done this a few years before.

You, my friends, are well acquainted with the life of this good man, and it is not neceſſary in order to confirm you in the beſt opinion of him, that I ſhould mention any more inſtances of the excellence of his heart. In the following extract from a letter* which he addreſſed to a particular friend† in Scotland, you will perceive that Mr. Mort drew a perfect likeneſs of himſelf, in his picture of a genuine chriſtian.

" But, dear Madam, why ſhould you alarm us " with fears of never meeting again in this world. " Be ſo good to indulge us with the hope of " meeting once more at leaſt. Your good com-

* Written in July 1786.

† Mrs. Fergurſon.

" pany

" pany a few weeks, will not only add to our
" preſent happineſs, but will contribute to qualify
" us for greater felicity in that world where per-
" fect love and friendſhip dwell. I do not ſee
" why we ſhould not, while in this world, antici-
" pate the happineſs of the next. Certainly
" a genuine chriſtian enjoys, whilſt on earth, a
" felicity of the ſame kind as the pure ſpirits
" above. What I mean by the genuine chriſtian,
" is, one who has learned from Chriſt himſelf an
" habitual regard to the Almighty in his whole
" converſation,—one who fears, loves and truſts in
" him, is pleaſed and delighted that all things are
" governed by him, who is benevolence itſelf,—
" one who has learned from the divine Teacher,
" with the aſſiſtance of his holy ſpirit, to ingraft
" this god-like principle of benevolence into his
" whole ſoul,—in ſhort, one who loves the Lord
" his God with all his ſoul, and his neighbour as
" himſelf. From ſuch a chriſtian, a ſelfiſh, ſordid,
" covetous temper is entirely eradicated; pride is
" wholly extinguiſhed, envy killed, malice anni-
" hilated,—idleneſs, intemperance and debauchery
" prevented: in a word, 'he is born of God (as
" the beloved apoſtle emphatically expreſſes it) and
" cannot ſin;'—it would be ſelf-denial, contrary to
" his very nature. His delight is in doing good:
" every faculty is exerted in this work: it is his
" meat and drink. How bleſſed he, even in this
" diſordered world, who is thus acting in concert
" with all the pure ſpirits above! is viewed by
" them with delight! is reſpected by the good
" below as one of the excellent of the earth!

"This is the ſalvation Chriſt has brought us. "Every good chriſtian is in this ſtate,—is "already come to Mount Sion, to the city of the "living God, to the heavenly Jeruſalem, to an "innumerable company of angels, &c. &c.

"Dear Madam, how much is it to be wiſhed, "that true chriſtianity were underſtood by all its "profeſſors! And yet I think the knowledge of "it, is eaſily learned, by ſtudying carefully the "life and character of our divine Teacher,— "his doctrines and precepts the practical part of "St. Paul's epiſtles, the epiſtles of James, and "John, particularly the laſt, if men's minds have "not been already poiſoned by reading books, "mixt with antichriſtian principles. Theſe have "been my ſentiments for many years, though "different from thoſe of many ſerious, well-"meaning perſons. I am more confirmed in "them in my old age."

The ideas which Mr. Mort had long imbibed concerning the divine perfections and the nature of chriſtianity, as they had a great influence in the formation of that amiable character he poſſeſſed, were likewiſe the comfort and ſupport of his old age. They made the decline of life happy, becauſe they enabled him to look forward to futurity with chriſtian exultation. Having by his kindneſs created ſincere and firm friends; he never appeared to be leſs comfortable in his latter days, in conſequence of his not having formed that connection in life, which is ſometimes conſidered as a neceſſary proviſion againſt the ſolitarineſs of old age. He was always

full

full of ſpirits, and it was after only a few hours indiſpoſition, that he fell aſleep, January the 12, 1788, in the eighty-ſixth year of his age.

You, my friends, have deeply and juſtly lamented his death. But let us rejoice, that, though man is mortal, thoſe chriſtian virtues which render man the object of our love and veneration are immortal. They warm, it is to be hoped, many of your breaſts. There are, we truſt, in our religious ſociety, ſome who will tread in his footſteps, and emulate his zeal and his exertions in behalf of practical religion and of pure chriſtianity. You will naturally have your eyes fixed upon *him* in particular, who ſat at the feet of our late patriarch, who was peculiarly marked out as an object of his eſteem, and who hath already afforded you ſome evidence of his being actuated by the ſame principles. But whilſt we look up to *others*, let us never forget what we *ourſelves* owe to the cauſe of truth and of religion. There is not one among us who is not bound to do his utmoſt towards ſaving his own ſoul, and the ſouls of other men. That you may never be unmindful of your obligations, and that the Almighty may graciouſly accept and proſper all your ſincere and upright endeavours to promote the knowledge and influence of the goſpel, is the hearty wiſh and prayer of, my chriſtian friends,

Your affectionate and faithful brother
in the Lord Jeſus,
H. TOULMIN.

CHOWBENT, JAN. 27, 1789.

The principal part of the following character was firſt inſerted by Mr. Gore, in his Liverpool Paper. It afterwards appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine, for February 1788.

The late Mr. John Mort was the laſt male repreſentative of an ancient and highly reſpectable family: a man equally diſtinguiſhed for his piety, his benevolence and the guileleſs ſimplicity of his manners. The leiſure he enjoyed, from the avocations of buſineſs, was principally devoted to the ſtudy of the ſcriptures, and unlearned in the ſubtleties of ſcholaſtic divinity, his inquiries were directed by the light of a clear underſtanding, and the dictates of an upright heart. As the truths of chriſtianity opened upon his mind, he was charmed with the majeſtic ſimplicity which marks the religion of the goſpel: and whilſt he felt its ſuperior influence in enlightening his underſtanding, enlarging his views, and regulating the affections of his heart, the anxious and unremitting zeal with which he endeavoured to propagate his principles, in that circle through which his influence could extend, ſpeaks a leſſon of inſtruction to thoſe who are devoted to theology by profeſſion. He had been for many years a zealous, an active, and a truly uſeful member of the ſociety of unitarian chriſtians at Chowbent; and was remarkably ſucceſsful in his endeavours to promote free inquiry and what he eſteemed to be unclouded views of chriſtianity. But his religion did not terminate in mere ſpeculation; it was ſeated in his honeſt heart. The uniform piety he maintained through life, was equally

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the reſult of principle and affection. The regularity of his devotions and the cheerfulneſs of his temper, were equally remarkable. He was open as the day to melting charity, and plain-hearted hoſpitality was ever found beneath his roof. The poor, they bleſſed him. Every public ſpirited deſign which lay within the reach of his abilities, he was ever forward to ſupport. By the force of perſonal character, he retained a patriarchal authority in his neighbourhood to the laſt. In every exigency, his opinion was conſulted, and his advice followed, as it was always the dictate of integrity and of a ſound underſtanding. It is remarkable that old age had not upon his mind, the ſame effect as upon the generality of men. His mind was the ſame in the decline as in the meridian of life: there was the ſame cheerfulneſs, the ſame humane ſenſibility, the ſame devotional fervour, the ſame ardour in the cauſe of liberty, of truth and of religion.—Healthy by temperance and exerciſe, his life, though long, was unimbittered by ſickneſs; and his death was almoſt inſtantaneous and without a groan.—Go, worthy man, prepared to enjoy a ſtation in a happier world, ſuited to the virtues which adorned thy life in this!

The following lines were written by the celebrated Mrs. Barbauld, when upon a viſit to Mr. Mort about ſixteen years ago.

" Happy old man! who ſtretch'd beneath the ſhade
" Of large grown trees, or in the ruſtic porch,
" With woodbine canopies (where linger yet
" The hoſpitable virtues) calm enjoy'ſt

" Nature's

"Nature's beſt bleſſings all,—a healthy age
" Ruddy and vigorous, native cheerfulneſs,
" Plain-hearted friendſhip, ſimple piety,
" The rural manners and the rural joys
" Friendly to life. Tho' rude* of ſpeech, yet rich
" In genuine worth, not unobſerv'd ſhall paſs
" Thy baſhful virtues; for the Muſe ſhall mark,
" Detect thy charities, and call to light
" Thy ſecret deeds of mercy; while the poor,
" The deſolate and friendleſs, at thy gate,
" A numerous family, with better praiſe,
" Shall hallow in their hearts, thy ſpotleſs name."

* Alluding to a natural impediment in his ſpeech.

A SERMON

A

SERMON

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

Mr. JOHN MORT,

AND PREACHED IN THE

NEW CHAPEL AT CHOWBENT,

IN ATHERTON,

JANUARY 20, 1788.

A

SERMON, &c.

LUKE xxiii. 47.

CERTAINLY THIS WAS A RIGHTEOUS MAN.

THERE was ſomething uncommonly awful in thoſe appearances in nature, which accompanied the death of Jeſus. Such a concurrence of extraordinary events had been ſcarcely ever known before. "Behold the vail of the "temple was rent in two from the top to the bot-"tom; and the earth did quake; and the rocks "rent; and the ſun was darkened; and the "graves were opened; and many bodies of the "ſaints, who ſlept, aroſe." We cannot wonder therefore that the centurion, and thoſe who were with him, being witneſſes of theſe things, feared greatly, and glorified God, ſaying, "Certainly this was a righteous man." Had the ſame centurion been acquainted with the life and conduct, as well as with the death of Jeſus, it would have abundantly confirmed this favourable opinion of our Maſter. Had he been with him, whilſt he went about doing good; had he witneſſed his affection

affection towards his aſſociates; his tenderneſs to the afflicted; his compaſſion for the multitude; his love for his country; and his piety to God, he would undoubtedly have ſaid, "Certainly this is a righteous man." Theſe were the ſureſt indications of his character: and theſe are indications of character, by which we may judge of men in every age and in every ſituation. Miraculous atteſtations to the moral excellence of any one, are no longer to be found: nor have we any reaſon greatly to regret it, when the natural and more direct proofs of the beſt of hearts, are ſo clear and deciſive in favour of a man, as they were in favour of our late venerable friend Mr. Mort.

No one who was acquainted with this true diſciple of the amiable Jeſus, will be backward to apply to him, the declaration of the centurion concerning our Lord, "Certainly this was a righteous man." Were I diſpoſed, my friends, to make the virtues of the deceaſed, the theme of a whole diſcourſe, contrary as ſuch a practice is to the reigning faſhion, I ſhould entertain no apprehenſion of your cenſure; could I, by ſo doing, render juſtice to his character. Such, I am perſuaded, is your veneration for his memory, that you would gladly ſee me breaking through a general rule, and would cordially accompany me in every expreſſion of affection and reſpect.

No one can be more clearly convinced than the preacher is, of the impropriety of making it a common practice, upon occaſions of this kind, to paſs ſome particular encomiums upon the character of the deceaſed. But, at the ſame time, he thinks, that

that there are men of ſingular worth, appearing now and then in a neighbourhood, whom we cannot ſuffer to paſs by unnoticed, without doing an injury to the cauſe of religion. Theſe are men, whoſe lives ought to be held up as objects of imitation,—their examples being frequently, perhaps, of more importance to thoſe who were connected with them than the examples of the worthies of antiquity. To the lives of the one we ourſelves were probably eye witneſſes,—but the lives of the other we know nothing of, but by report and tradition.

It would be happy, my brethren, if we were properly affected by reviewing the life of the friend, whoſe departure we now lament. Never did we know a man, who hath exhibited a pattern more deſerving our attention and imitation. Indeed, my friends, I feel myſelf utterly unequal to the taſk of giving you an *adequate* view of his character,—and were I to attempt it, I ſhould fear, that thoſe whoſe acquaintance with him has been more perfect and of longer duration than mine, would ſay that I had not done him juſtice. To ſuch therefore, I would refer any who have not lived in habits of intimacy with him for information.

Aſk thoſe, who were ſo happy as to form a part of his family,—aſk them what man he was in private? They will tell you, that he was perfectly regular in his deportment,—that he was remarkably attentive to religious worſhip in his houſe,—and uniformly ſtudious to promote, by a cheerful temper and a kind demeanour, the peace and comfort of thoſe with whom he was connected. Though

he

he was ever forward, when it lay in his power, to do any thing for the benefit of others; he was always ſingularly anxious to be as little troubleſome as poſſible himſelf. He never appeared to have a wiſh of availing himſelf, in the leaſt, of thoſe marks of attention and reſpect, to which his age or his character, or his ſituation, entitled him. All whom he favoured with his acquaintance, will tell us that he was the agreeable companion,—and always the ſincere, the open-hearted, the ſteady friend. The man whom he called his friend in proſperity, he called his friend in adverſity: for his attachments were withdrawn only by a change of diſpoſition or conduct in the objects of his regard.

But aſk not ſuch as were his intimate and ſelect aſſociates merely: aſk every one who had any dealings with him, if there were ever a man who dealt with greater fairneſs and integrity. They will tell us that his honeſty was always ſuperior to a love of intereſt: that he hath conſidered himſelf as bound by the laws of God, to act in oppoſition to his own perſonal advantage, in caſes, in which the leſs ſcrupulous conſciences of men of common probity would have ſuffered them to conſider themſelves as at perfect liberty. Yet it was never the diſpoſition of our amiable friend, to be ſatisfied with a diſcharge of thoſe duties alone which are dictated by the principles of equity; for never did *univerſal love* glow with greater ardour in the human breaſt.

In proof of this, we may appeal to the ſons of ſorrow, of every deſcription. But, indeed, an appeal to them muſt be unneceſſary. The men who have

witneſſed his pity, and experienced his liberality, are to be met with any where in this neighbourhood, and there are few before me, but have heard ſome unfortunate man relate with what tenderneſs he has looked upon his diſtreſſes. An object of pity never went to his door in vain. Nor did he wound the feelings of the humble ſuppliant, with a long liſt of harſh inquiries, before he granted the boon of charity. A deſtitute appearance, and an honeſt countenance, he thought, entitled any one to this regard. Some may, perhaps, imagine, that he granted relief with too indiſcriminate an hand. But he had an idea probably, that by checking the emotions of pity, upon principles of prudence, there is iminent danger of weakening the power of that amiable affection, and that it therefore became him to give the rein to his humane feelings, though he regarded only the improvement of his own mind. Certainly, then, this was a righteous man.

But his title to the appellation of a righteous man, could not be more clearly proved than by his conduct as a member of this religious ſociety. It was ſuch a conduct as I have the confidence to think that every chriſtian preſent muſt approve. For my *own* part, I ſhould admire and reſpect the zeal of a liberal minded church-man, or Roman catholic, though not exerted in ſupport of that particular form of worſhip, which is adopted by chriſtians of our denomination: and I ſhould be moſt blameably deficient in charity, did I not believe, that any of you, my brethren, if any of our brethren of the Church of England,

or of Rome, be preſent,* would feel an equal veneration for the religious zeal of a man, who ranked himſelf amongſt the proteſtant diſſenters. Yes, my brethren of every ſect, I believe that you have enough of the ſpirit of the Goſpel, to eſteem excellence, wherever it is found. Inquire, then, of the members of this chriſtian ſociety, if there were ever one of their number more active or more uſeful than our deceaſed friend? They will aſſure you as ſtrongly as they can, that they never knew his equal. They will ſpeak of him as the father of this congregation. They will tell you with what generoſity he contributed to the ſupport of their reſpectability as a religious ſociety; how earneſt he was in promoting any plan for their improvement in knowledge and in virtue, and for the maintenance of their peace and felicity. Indeed he had nothing more at heart, than to extinguiſh every ſpark of diſcord and animoſity, and to fan the flame of brotherly love,—that unity and harmony might univerſally prevail among us.

They will tell you, that he was equally exemplary in the regularity of his attendance upon public worſhip, and that, though for many years paſt, he might have pleaded his age, as an apology for more indulgence than he was accuſtomed to in younger life, yet, he was as conſtant as any one, to the day of his death. Though few men *needed* it leſs, none were more mindful of the means of improvement: for he never had an idea that be-

* As I have been told is ſometimes the caſe.

cauſe a man may, for the moſt part, be already acquainted with thoſe truths which are delivered from the pulpit, he is, therefore, excuſed from reſorting to the place of public worſhip. But why do we mention theſe particulars? The ſingle circumſtance of his influence with this ſociety of chriſtians, is of itſelf a proof, that he was a reſpectable and uſeful member of the ſociety. You, my brethren, will not ſcruple to inform any ſtranger that may queſtion you, that the opinion of Mr. Mort would have weighed more with you, than the opinion of any ten perſons in the congregation. You will at the ſame time aſſure him, that this influence could never have been owing to our friend's poſſeſſing greater property than other perſons, or merely to the liberality of his contributions to the ſupport of public inſtruction, but to a ſingularly amiable diſpoſition, and to a general reſpectability of character. But when you are ſpeaking of his influence over us, you will be careful not to let any one imagine that he was ever forward to exert that influence, but in promoting peace and unanimity. Very frequently has he freely given up his own views and ſentiments to thoſe of other people:—and he has in many caſes been ſilent, with reſpect to meaſures which he conceived would be of great utility, particularly with regard to the method of conducting public worſhip,* merely from the apprehenſion, that his ideas might poſſibly vary from the ideas of ſome individuals in the congre-

* See p. 31.

gation:

gation: you muſt all, my friends, have known inſtances of his backwardneſs to declare his own private opinion upon queſtions which have in courſe come before this ſociety; leſt he ſhould throw an undue bias in the way of your deliberations. It was his uniform wiſh to throw a bias on no ſide but on the ſide of virtue. To this point he directed all his influence. To improve the amiable diſpoſitions of thoſe with whom he was connected was an object which he had at heart to the very lateſt hour of his life. With this view, he drew up, not long before his death, an addreſs to this chriſtian ſociety, intimating a wiſh that it ſhould be communicated to them after his departure. You, my chriſtian brethren, I truſt, will pay to it all the regard due to the dying words of an old and much reſpected friend. I will recite it to you, believing that an attention to it may be of benefit, not to thoſe only who conſider themſelves as members of this ſociety, but to any of our fellow-chriſtians, who are not regular attendants at this place.

"*My dear Friends and Fellow-Chriſtians of our Religious Society at Chowbent:*

The uncommon reſpect you have always ſhewn me, makes me confident you will receive this, my parting and farewell addreſs with candour. Though the ſubject of it may be ſingular and out of the common way, I hope it may be of real ſervice to ſome of you. It is my hearty wiſh that you would, with due care, conſider what

may be learned from a ſerious meditation upon an important part of the hiſtory of the life of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, as the following.

First Consideration. Whether there was not one diſciple whom he loved more than any one of the reſt?

Second Consideration. Whether it was not the humane, friendly, benevolent diſpoſition of the apoſtle John, that made him this favourite?

Third Consideration. Whether it is not in our power, if we do our beſt, to attain to this amiable temper?

Fourth Consideration. How inconſiſtent are thoſe who know and believe this hiſtorical truth, and yet are unconcerned whether they attain to this amiable diſpoſition: eſpecially if they believe that our Saviour will be their judge, at the day of final retribution?

Fifth Consideration. Whether thoſe who attain to the amiable diſpoſition of the apoſtle John, will not be owned and reward, by the impartial Judge, as his favourites, before men and angels, at the great day of final retribution?

What good theſe meditations may do you, I know not; but this I know, that theſe meditations on this part of hiſtory have done me more good than all the practical diſcourſes which I have heard or read. *Auguſt* 10, 1788."

From this you may ſee, my brethren, upon what his mind was moſt intent. It was upon making us wiſer and better. "Certainly, then, this was a righteous man." In this light indeed every one

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is diſpoſed to conſider him; for there have been few perſons held in ſuch univerſal eſteem. He was reſpected and beloved not only by people of his own perſuaſion, but by men of all ſects and parties. All were prepoſſeſſed in his favour. And, were ſhall we ſeek for the cauſe of this, but but in the *character* of the man. His rank, his wealth, his influence, his power, were by no means ſuch as to procure him this regard. It was merely the charitable uſe he made of the little he poſſeſſed; his conſtant readineſs to relieve the diſtreſſed, and in general, that "humane, friendly, benevolent diſpoſition," he had learnt from the favourite of Jeſus, which rendered him ſo much the object of univerſal love. Indeed had our fellow-chriſtians of the Eſtabliſhed Church or of the Church of Rome, heard his expreſſions of charity and kindneſs for them, and for all the houſehold of faith; had they known with what uncommon ſatisfaction he has liſtened to ſuch exhortations from the pulpit, as have been dictated by a deſire of promoting the influence of a liberal and catholic ſpirit; they would have been ſtrongly confirmed in their favourable opinion of him, and with one heart and one voice would have echoed, "certainly this is a righteous man." They, therefore, will feelingly concur with his more immediate connections in lamenting that a man ſo excellent and ſo amiable is no more. But at the ſame time, we have reaſon to be thankful, my friends, that Almighty God was pleaſed to continue him to us, for a length of time, ſo much exceeding the common term of human life, and

eſpecially that he bleſſed him, with a capacity for uſefulneſs, even to his lateſt days. And now, though he is ſleeping with his fathers, let us not conſider him as a friend whom we have loſt for ever. He is only retired to reſt, and will awake with renewed vigour in the morning of the reſurrection. Thoſe amiable qualities, thoſe chriſtian virtues which adorned his mind, and made him the object of our eſteem and love, are only like the flowers in winter, withered, indeed, for a little time, but which, on the return of ſpring, will appear again in all their lovelineſs and beauty. Then ſhall we once more behold, and once more admire, that integrity, that generoſity, that humanity, that piety, that zeal for truth and for religion, which in this world we have contemplated with ſo much delight and ſatisfaction. Then ſhall we ſee thoſe virtues unfettered in their exertions by the various difficulties which weaken their efforts in this mortal ſtate, and the good man himſelf traverſing with ardour and with chriſtian exultation, a much wider field of uſefulneſs than the preſent world is capable of affording. Did I ſay that *we* ſhall behold him in the world of bliſs? We *ſhall*, indeed, if we be poſſeſſed of a ſoul like his:—but it is in vain for us to expect it otherwiſe. The ſociety to which he will belong, will be that of juſt men made perfect: a ſociety of which we muſt become members, would we have communion with him. Let us then endeavour to copy, as nearly as we can, that pattern which he hath left for our imitation. Let us retire to our cloſets, and review,

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as impartially as we are able, our diſpoſitions and paſt behaviour,—compare them with thoſe of our departed friend, and mark wherein lies our principal deficiency. Let us mark it carefully, that in future our principal attention may be directed towards an amendment. Let us never forget how amiable our friend was rendered by the virtues which adorned his mind, how truly he became thereby the object of every one's love and veneration.

Do you, my brethren, who are members of this religious ſociety, pay an eſpecial attention to the character he ſuſtained as one of our number. Let us call to mind his generous zeal, and his influence among us: and let it be the aim of every one of us, to fill his place, not by ſtriving to acquire the ſame weight with the ſociety, but by endeavouring to cultivate the ſame amiable ſpirit, and to do the ſame good. If, inſtead of this, he had ſought popularity and influence, it is probable that he would never have obtained it. Had he not frequently ſacrificed his private ſentiments and wiſhes, though founded in truth, to thoſe of other perſons, he would never have maintained,—juſtly as he deſerved it,—he would never have maintained the influence he had acquired. Let us, my friends, imitate in this reſpect, the example of our elder brother. Let us not be eager to bring forward any favourite plans, unleſs we be fully ſatisfied that the welfare of the ſociety is intimately connected with them:—nor let us vehemently ſupport our own opinions, when we find that they vary from thoſe of our fellow chriſtian,

chriſtians, but let our moderation be known unto all men. If we be liberal in promoting the knowledge of religion, if we be lovers of peace and unity, and, above all, if we be unblameable in our deportment and followers of that which is good, we ſhall obtain and preſerve all the influence which a good man can wiſh for, or which a chriſtian has a right to expect. But I ſay no more. I am addreſſing the diſciples of Jeſus. "One is your maſter, even Chriſt, and all ye are brethren."

A PRAYER

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PRAYER FOR A FAMILY.*

O LORD our God, we worſhip thee who art the one only living and true God, beſides whom there is no other. The idols of the heathen are vanity and a lie: thoſe who truſt in them, are like unto them; but thou art from everlaſting, to everlaſting, God, without the leaſt variableneſs or ſhadow of turning: the great Creator, the wiſe and righteous Governor, and the juſt Judge of the world. Worthy, O Lord, art thou of our moſt profound reverence and adoration, our conſtant and faithful obedience, our firmeſt truſt and confidence, our joy and delight; for thou poſſeſſeſt all poſſible perfection, natural and moral. Thou art a Being of all-comprehending knowledge, unerring and infallible wiſdom, unlimitted power, impartial juſtice, boundleſs goodneſs, unſpotted purity, unchangeable truth and faithfulneſs. Theſe thy perfections are conſtantly exerciſed for the good of the whole creation. Wherever we turn our eye, what part ſoever of thy works we contemplate, we ſee the footſteps of an Almighty hand,—we ſee thy power, wiſdom and goodneſs,

* Theſe prayers might be properly uſed at any meetings for the purpoſes of religious improvement, ſuch as have been lately ſet on foot in this neighbourhood by the members of our congregation.

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manifeſted in a moſt glorious manner. We adore thee as our Creator, our conſtant Preſerver, and the Redeemer of our ſouls. We praiſe thee who haſt placed us ſo high in the rank of beings, in this lower world; who haſt ſubjected all other creatures to our uſe and conveniency, making man a lord of this lower world. It has pleaſed thee to confer on us the noble gifts of reaſon, intelligence and liberty, whereby we are made capable of yielding unto thee an acceptable ſervice and obedience, and of attaining to the higheſt honours, to the moſt refined and ſolid bliſs. Happy had it been for us, had we always behaved ſuitably to the dignity of our rational nature, and been faithful in thy ſervice: but alas! we have reaſon to acknowledge with the deepeſt ſhame, that we have neglected to cultivate and improve the noble talents which by thy goodneſs have been intruſted to us. In our careleſneſs we have ſuffered ourſelves to be corrupted by the temptations that are in the world, through luſt. The objects of our ſenſes have often, through our own fault, made an undue impreſſion on our minds: we have thereby been enticed to do many things unbecoming the dignity of our rational nature, much more unbecoming our character as chriſtians. If thou ſhouldſt be ſevere to animadvert on all our paſt follies and miſcarriages, we ſhould be miſerable indeed: but with thee there is mercy, that thou mayeſt be feared. We rejoice to know, that thou art by the goſpel of Jeſus, reconciling a ſinful world unto thyſelf, not imputing unto the humble, the penitent and obedient, their iniquity and tranſgreſſions.

tranſgreſſions. Thou haſt given us this aſſurance by thy Son Jeſus Chriſt, whom thou haſt exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remiſſion of ſins to thy people. Having ſuch encouragement, we would ſincerely repent of all our paſt follies: we would now acquaint ourſelves with thee, and be at peace, that thereby good may come: we deſire from the heart to forgive thoſe who have treſpaſſed againſt us: we would now engage ourſelves without reſerve in thy ſervice. Be gracious, O Lord, to forgive all our paſt iniquities; receive us into thy favour; aid us by thy ſpirit, that we may make good our reſolutions againſt ſin; that we may overcome the world, and maintain conſtantly a juſt government over our paſſions, appetites and affections, regulating them according to the rules of reaſon, and of thy word. May we always live under the influence of a divine faith, and attain to that meaſure of it, which will give us a happy victory over this world. May we have that faith which works by love, and purifies the heart and conduct: may the ſincerity of our faith and love be manifeſted, by an obedient life, a fruitful converſation; and may we do all we can to advance thine honour, obedience to thy laws, and the good of mankind: eſpecially may we ſtrive to adorn our profeſſion, by being examples of every thing that is virtuous and praiſeworthy; aiming ſtill at higher attainments in knowledge, wiſdom and virtue; and may we be daily more confirmed and eſtabliſhed in the ways of truth and goodneſs. Amidſt the many changes, difficulties, and trials of life, may we be enabled

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to preſerve a becoming ſerenity of temper, always in patience poſſeſſing our ſouls: at laſt may we finiſh well, and have an abundant entrance into thine everlaſting kingdom.

Hear,* O Lord, our prayers for others: extend thy merciful regards to the whole world. In compaſſion to the infirmities of mankind, ſend into every dark corner of the earth the ſaving light of thy goſpel: and where thy goſpel is ſent, may it meet with due reception; may men learn from it, as it teaches them, to deny all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, to live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent evil world. O that men may every where learn to know and fear thee, and to work righteouſneſs, that they may be accepted of thee. May chriſtianity prevail in its native purity: may all profeſſing chriſtians learn an humble, charitable, benevolent diſpoſition of mind: may there be no more deſtroying in all thine holy mountain: may none that profeſs themſelves the followers of Jeſus, dare to uſurp the ſacred rights of conſcience: may thoſe who have dared to oppreſs the cauſe of truth, be aſhamed: may that liberty which Jeſus has left to his churches, be maintained by all his followers: may our civil and religious rights be preſerved to us to the lateſt generations, that ages yet unborn may praiſe thy name. Above all, ſave us from our ſins: may not iniquity be our ruin. By a ſincere reformation from our ſins, may

* This paragraph may be omitted when the whole prayer would be too long.

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we have better ground to hope for the continuance of thy favours. Bleſs our king: may he rule in thy fear: may he ſtill live and be a great bleſſing to us: under him may we enjoy peaceable and quiet lives, in all godlineſs and honeſty. Bleſs the prince of Wales, form his mind to a love of piety, virtue and liberty: may all the royal family be bleſſed: never may we want a proteſtant prince to ſway the ſceptre of theſe nations. May all of us in our different ſtations exert ourſelves, and uſe the influence we have to diſcourage vice, to promote rational piety and ſolid virtue. In this important work eſpecially may the miniſters of the goſpel be diligent and faithful, and do thou, O Father, make them ſucceſsful. *(This day * may acceptable ſervices be performed in all thy churches: may we worſhip thee who art a ſpirit, in ſpirit and in truth, and may the truths we ſhall hear or read, be uſeful to us.)*

We praiſe thee for the mercies of the paſt *night (or day)*. 'Tis thou who keepeſt us from the terrors by night, and from the arrows that fly by day; ſtill be our kind guardian; and may the cloſe of every day be comfortable. Pity, O God of all comfort, thoſe who want our mercies, eaſe the pained, raiſe up thoſe that are bowed down, comfort the feeble-minded, provide for the poor: manifeſt thy goodneſs to thoſe that love and fear thee. We aſk all as the diſciples of Jeſus thy well beloved Son our Saviour; and as he hath taught us, would aſcribe unto thee, the King eternal,

* To be introduced on Sunday morning.

immortal,

immortal, inviſible, the one only living and true God, all might, majeſty and dominion, now and evermore. Amen.

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SECOND PRAYER.

O MOST great and glorious Jehovah, the high and holy One inhabiting eternity! Thou only poſſeſſeſt all poſſible perfection, art glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders. Thou art the greateſt and the beſt of Beings: goodneſs is thy nature and delight. Thou haſt proclaimed thyſelf to be the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, ſlow to anger, abundant in goodneſs and mercy, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin. Though thou canſt by no means clear the guilty, ſuch as are impenitently ſo; it has pleaſed thee to make a free and open declaration by thy ſon Jeſus Chriſt, of thy readineſs to forgive every ſincerely repenting and returning ſinner. We rejoice in thy promiſed pardon and ſalvation: we praiſe thee who haſt called us with an holy calling,—called us to virtue, to liberty, to glory. All Things are now ready on thy part, for our being received into thy kingdom, for our being made wiſe, virtuous, holy and happy. May not this ſalvation miſs on our part, through our obſtinacy, or negligence: may we cheerfully comply with the

the requirements of thy goſpel: may we forſake every falſe way, be enabled to rectify the diſorders of our mind, to aſſert the liberty of our ſouls; may the goſpel of Jeſus make us free, and we ſhall be free indeed. Enable us frequently and ſeriouſly to take an impartial and deliberate ſurvey of our own tempers and characters, and to bring our actions before the tribunal of reaſon and conſcience. And do thou, O moſt merciful Father of our ſpirits, ſearch us and try us: remove the veil of ſelf-love and partiality from before the eyes of our minds, and ſhew us to ourſelves in our genuine colours. Whatever is irregular and perverted in our inward frame, do thou graciouſly aſſiſt us in rectifying. If there be any good diſpoſitions in us, may they be abundantly ſtrengthened and eſtabliſhed by thee. May we never reſt ſatisfied with any attainments we have already made in virtue, or think that we are already perfect. But, forgetting the things which are behind, may we preſs forward with unremitting ardour towards the mark of the prize of our high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.

Aſſiſt us in cultivating every divine and amiable diſpoſition, that our tempers may be ſweetened, our hearts purified, our manners refined, and that our ſouls may daily be advancing to perfection. We would learn of our dear and honoured maſter an humble, compaſſionate, benevolent temper of mind. May old things be done away: may all things become new: may we be created anew in Chriſt Jeſus, to ſerve thee the living and true God: ſo may we behave ourſelves,

that on the moſt impartial examination of our conduct, we may have reaſon to approve it, may have confidence towards thee, and may always on good grounds rejoice in hope of Glory. May we live under the influence of a divine faith, behave with becoming indifference to preſent things, knowing that we have not long to ſtay here. May we uſe this world as not abuſing it, ſeeing the faſhion of it paſſeth away: and whilſt we are neceſſarily employed about things pertaining to this life, may we by no means be unmindful of our future intereſt. May we above all things take care to ſecure a good foundation againſt the time to come, ſeeking the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, not doubting but that all needful things will be added to us. Support us under the difficulties that yet lie before us in the preſent ſtate of trial. May we be humble in proſperity, patient and reſigned in adverſity. May every affliction prove in thy hand, a kind and faithful means of diſcipline to train up our minds in the exerciſe of thoſe virtues, which will make us uſeful here, bleſſings in our ſtations, and fit us for being joined to a purer ſociety above, amongſt whom, none that are impure, ſhall ever be admitted.

Bleſſed be thy name, O gracious Father, for the mercies we have enjoyed through our paſt lives, and for the various comforts which ſurround us at preſent. We thank thee for the meaſure of health we enjoy in our bodies, and for the free and regular exerciſe of the powers and faculties of our minds. May thy kind providence ſtill watch

watch over us, and crown all our honourable undertakings and honeſt labours with ſucceſs. Enable us to diſcharge every duty with integrity and cheerfulneſs, and to improve every bleſſing we receive from thee to thine honour and glory, and all the praiſe ſhall be rendered to thine excellent name. Theſe our prayers we would preſent unto thee, O God of grace in the ſpirit of thy Son's goſpel. Now unto the bleſſed and the only Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, be all honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

THE END.

The Reader is deſired to correct the following Numbers of the Pages.

For Folio 56, 57, read 36, 37.
Ditto 60, 61, read 40, 41.
Ditto 64, read 44.